

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 041136Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9214

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 2187

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB

SUBJ: ARMY TAKES CHARGE OF GROUND FORCES ALONG THE LOWER MEKONG

1. ALTHOUGH MOST OF OUR RECENT MESSAGES HAVE BEEN CONCERNED WITH THE "BIG PICTURE" OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND THE POLICY OPTIONS FACING US, WE ARE OF COURSE DEVOTING MOST OF OUR ENERGY AND ATTENTION TO THE MORE MUNDANE BUT EQUALLY IMPORTANT MATTER OF TRYING TO IMPROVE THE MILITARY SITUATION. WE HAVE SPENT MANY HOURS WITH CINC/FANK SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF FANK KEEPING THE MEKONG OPEN. THE FANK BATTALIONS WHICH HAD BEEN REINSERTED AT SOME OF THE CHOKE POINTS IN JANUARY TO FACILITATE PASSAGE OF THE CONVOYS, AND WHICH ARE UNDER THE OVERALL COMMAND OF THE NAVY, HAVE PROVEN THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE THE ORGANIZATION, BACKSTOPPING CAPACITY IN PHNOM PENH AND MANPOWER RESERVES TO DO THE JOB. ADMIRAL SARENDY ALREADY HAS A HARD ENOUGH TIME SUPERVISING KHMER NAVAL ACTIVITIES AND CAN NOT DEVOTE ENOUGH TIME TO GIVE CLOSE SUPERVISION TO THESE GROUND TROOPS. THEREFORE THE COMMANDER OF FANK, GENERAL SOSTENE, DECIDED TO PUT THE GROUND TROOP OPERATIONS ALONG THE MEKONG UNDER THE COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL PARAMOUN WHO HAD SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED PREY VENG AND SVAY RIENG IN THE PAST AND LATELY HAD BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE ENCLAVE AT NEAK LUONG. ADMIRAL SARENDY REMAINS IN CHARGE OF CONVOYS.

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2. I AM JUST CITING THIS REORGANIZATION OF THE FANK

COMMAND STRUCTURE ON THE MEKONG AND RESUPPLYING THESE
POSITIONS IN AMMO AND RICE AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE TYPE OF ISSUES
WHICH MUST BE DEALT WITH HERE ON A DAILY BASIS BUT WHICH
USUALLY ARE NOT REPORTED TO WASHINGTON ALTHOUGH THEY
CONSUME MUCH OF OUR ATTENTION.

DEAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 04 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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